

Chapter Five

Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting (ISTAR)

The Purpose of ISTAR

Federal law (IDEA 2008) and state law require that all students participate in Indiana's assessment system. For most students with special needs, this law requires participation in ISTEP+ assessments, with or without accommodations. For students with disabilities, however, the Case Conference Committee (CCC) may determine that the *Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting (ISTAR)* is the most appropriate assessment instrument. ISTAR is the only alternate assessment that is recognized in Indiana for the purpose of statewide accountability.

ISTAR-AA

The purpose of the *Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting (ISTAR-AA)* program is to measure student achievement in the subject areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies based on alternate academic achievement standards. Students who perform significantly below grade-level may have personal learning goals that cannot be adequately measured with a grade-level standardized assessment. ISTAR-AA is a web-based system that utilizes teacher ratings on performance threads, comprised of progressive skills based on alternate academic achievement standards that are appropriate to the student's achievement level. The Case Conference Committee determines, based on the eligibility criteria adopted by the Indiana State Board of Education and the student's individual and unique needs, whether a student with a disability will be assessed with ISTAR-AA. This criteria is available at: <http://www.doe.in.gov/achievement/assessment/istar>.

Although meant to be a continuous process throughout the year, ISTAR-AA assessment ratings must be updated and completed during the time frame of **March 1 through April 30 of each testing year**. Only ISTAR-AA assessment ratings that have been completed correctly and within the required time frame will be reported for the purpose of school accountability determinations.

ISTAR-KR

The purpose of *Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting of Kindergarten Readiness (ISTAR-KR)* is to measure skills in children from infancy to kindergarten. A derivative of Indiana's Early Learning Standards (which are part of the Foundations to *Indiana Academic Standards*); ISTAR-KR is aligned to the *Indiana Academic Standards* for Kindergarten in the areas of English/language arts and mathematics and includes three functional areas: physical, personal care and social-emotional skills. Data from ISTAR-KR assessments are used in state reporting for PK students receiving special education. The assessment can also be used for local purposes in grades PK through I.

Teachers record ratings within this web-based instrument based on their ongoing observations of children engaged in typical daily routines and activities. It is available to all public schools in Indiana and to private early childhood education programs at no cost. Assessment results from ISTAR-KR can be used to determine the skills a child has mastered and the skills a student needs to learn next. Aggregate data comparing entrance and exit scores for children exiting preschool services is submitted annually by the state to the federal Office of Special Education Programs. Individual student assessment results of ISTAR-KR are made available to family members at specific intervals when the assessment is used to measure student progress (**upon entrance, at exit, and annually on the child's birthday**). For specific results, please contact the facility that provides educational services to the child.

Structure and Content of ISTAR for 2012-2013

Testing personnel should note the following regarding the administration of the 2012-2013 ISTAR-AA and ISTAR-KR Assessments:

1. ISTAR-KR and ISTAR-AA are web-based instruments and are rated by teachers based on their ongoing observations of children engaged in typical daily routines and activities.
2. ISTAR-AA is administered each year from March 1-April 30. ISTAR-KR is administered upon entrance, at exit, and annually on the child's birthday.
3. ISTAR-KR and ISTAR-AA are accessed via the Learning Connection. A Learning Connection administrator must provide access to this assessment.

ISTAR-AA and ISTAR-KR Assessment Windows for 2012-2013

| Window | Dates | Administration |
|----------|--|----------------|
| ISTAR-AA | March 1 – April 30, 2013 | Online |
| ISTAR-KR | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• within six weeks of a student's entry into preschool services;• annually, on the child's birthday; and• when the student exits from preschool services | Online |

For additional information, please access <http://www.doe.in.gov/achievement/assessment>.